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## BOOK REVIEWS

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THE PROSECUTION OF JESUS: ITS DATE, HISTORY AND LEGALITY. By Richard Wellington Husband. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1916. Pp. 302.

Professor Husband's book deals with two problems, the date of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, and the legal aspects of the proceedings against him. In both divisions of the subject his conclusions are novel and are supported by able argumentation.

The date of Jesus' trial is discussed in the third of the nine chapters of the book and occupies 35 of its 302 pages. Recalling the quartodeciman controversy of the early church and the discrepancy between John and the synoptic writers, the author adopts the account of John, which places the crucifixion before the eating of the Passover meal, basing his conclusion upon the expressions of St. Paul and upon certain traces of uncertainty or inconsistency in the Synoptics. Inasmuch as all four Gospels agree in reporting that the crucifixion occurred on Friday and the resurrection on Sunday, Professor Husband looks for a year in which the Jewish Passover was eaten on Friday evening, instead of Thursday, and finds it in the year 33 A. D. (in 30 A. D., the generally accepted date, the meal was eaten Thursday evening). Professor J. M. Poor of Dartmouth College has furnished him the astronomical data on which to base his calculations. This is the essential contents of the chapter; the author, however, discusses as well the chronological datum of Luke 3:1-2 and the Synoptists' notion of the length of the ministry, and adduces as an additional argument for a date later than the accepted one the fact that Pilate had had time to institute the practice of releasing a prisoner at the time of the Passover. In the discussion of these subsidiary matters the author is perhaps less convincing than in that of the main issue, although he cannot be charged with slighting evidence or with unwillingness to seek for it laboriously and keenly. But it is certainly worth inquiring, for example, whether Luke's datum represents anything more than an attempt to give a date consistent with Luke's own view of the chronology, and the argument derived from Pilate's custom involves the subjective factor, how long it takes to establish a custom, as well as the delicate question of the use of the imperfect tense. The matter can hardly be considered settled in a chapter's argument.

To the discussion of the legal proceedings Professor Husband applies a new and a praiseworthy method, because it is scientific and highly rational. He very properly discards at the outset any thought of explaining matters on the basis of Jewish law alone, or of Roman legal procedure as followed in the capital city, or of the codes compiled hundreds of years later, and bases his theories upon the criminal law of the Roman provinces, now known better than ever before through Egyptian papyri which have been available for the past fifteen years. This evidence of course applies directly to the province of

Egypt alone and can be used in the case of Palestine only by analogy. The author points out that in Egypt the governor (*praefectus*) possessed the sole power to decide criminal cases and actually did decide them when their importance warranted, delegating only the relatively unimportant ones to his subordinates; that the preliminary proceedings were held before the presidents (*strategoi*) of the districts (*nomoi*) and that the cases were prepared in their courts for the governor's inspection; and that the governor regularly went the circuit of the administrative centers of his province, holding assizes, a custom which forced him to dispose of a great many cases in a short time and necessitated in the provincial courts the adoption of a more expeditious, less cumbersome procedure than was the rule in Rome itself. With this as a fair sample of criminal procedure in Roman provinces, Professor Husband argues that the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin was in the nature of a grand jury hearing, for the purpose of bringing an indictment before Pilate, who alone could render a verdict, and that it was analogous to the preliminary proceedings before the Egyptian *strategoi*. This view of the matter relieves the critic of the necessity of charging the Sanhedrin with the most atrocious infractions of their own law and with a stupidity in the conduct of the whole case of which they would hardly be guilty, whatever their motives. Their "verdict," then, was not a verdict in the sense of a valid court decision, and I think Professor Husband is right in his contention that the Romans would never allow one of their own courts to be placed in the position of merely affirming the decision of a native provincial court and of pronouncing and executing the appropriate sentences. The only real trial of the case, he contends, was that held by Pilate. The accusation brought by the Sanhedrin was of an ecclesiastical nature, substantially one of "false prophecy" (a crime which lay within their competence), for they had decided that Jesus falsely claimed to be the Messiah. Pilate was naturally inclined to recognize the political implications of the Messiahship, and although he had to find Jesus technically guilty, he felt that he was not practically dangerous to Roman rule nor guilty of treasonable intent, and tried without success to induce the prosecutors to withdraw their suit before a verdict should have been pronounced.

This brief account of the argument of Professor Husband's book cannot do justice to the amount of labor he has expended upon the minor aspects of the case nor to the care he has taken to weigh every word of the sources. One feels that he has presented a strong argument tending to show that the prosecution of Jesus was legally conducted and in accordance with contemporary procedure, a result which may increase, rather than adversely modify, our confidence in the gospels as trustworthy records. His theory, in its broader aspect if not in every detail, will have to be taken into account by New Testament historians. A professed specialist, with more than a classicist's acquaintance among the intricacies of the synoptic problem and of late Greek idiom, would doubtless handle this material with more authority, but would most likely be lacking in Professor Husband's ability to deal with the general questions of Roman provincial administration. The present reviewer, however, believes that he should have stated definitely his own theory of the

relations between the Gospel sources, or else have supplied more specific references to the published views of modern investigators.

The book is typographically attractive, and the only misprint which forces itself upon the reader is "Why asketh thou?" (p. 103).

FRANK EGLESTON ROBBINS.

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THE DEPORTATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM LILLE. New York: George H. Doran Company. Pp. 81.

In April, 1916, some 25,000 French (the exact number is not known) were taken by the German military authorities from their homes at Roubaix, Tourcoing, and Lille, separated from their families, and compelled to do work of various sorts in the Departments of the Ardenne and Aisne. The people thus taken consisted not only of men up to the age of 55, but also of girls between 16 and 20 years of age and young women. The effect of this action upon the people of the occupied districts is well set forth in the ringing protest of the Bishop of Lille to General von Graevenitz: "The German officers who have been billeted for a long time in our homes know how deep in our hearts we of the North hold family affection and that it is sweetest thing in life to us. Thus, to dismember the family, by tearing youths and girls from their homes, is not war; it is for us torture and the worst of tortures—unlimited moral torture. The violation of family rights is doubled by a violation of the sacred demands of morality. Morality is exposed to perils, the mere idea of which revolts every honest man, from the promiscuity which inevitably accompanies removals *en masse*, involving the mixture of sexes, or, at all events, of persons of very unequal moral standing. Young girls of irreproachable life—who have never committed any worse offense than that of trying to pick up some bread or a few potatoes to feed a numerous family, and who have besides paid the light penalty for such trespass—have been carried off. Their mothers, who have watched so closely over them, and had no other joy than that of keeping their daughters beside them, in the absence of father and sons fighting or killed at the front—these mothers are now alone. They bring to me their despair and their anguish. I am speaking of what I have seen and heard."

This protest and likewise that of the Mayor of Lille were of no avail. The deportations were carried out with all the organized, efficient barbarity of which the German war machine is capable. The fact of deportation is admitted by the German government itself. That it was directly contrary to the Hague conventions cannot be denied. The present brief volume consists of transcripts of official documents, letters and depositions, which seem to establish beyond doubt the harshness and unnecessary cruelty of the procedure. The depositions which were made by refugees who succeeded in finding asylum in other parts of France, may not be correct in all details but the evidence collected comes from so many sources and it is so much to the same effect, that it carries conviction of its general truth. Had it been the intention of the German government to impugn the truth of these statements, it might have opened the whole matter to an impartial investigation. Such a